

Chesterfield Circuit Court Clerk's Office

Land Records Cover Sheet

Frequently Asked Questions

The following questions are primarily intended to assist regular patrons of the Clerk's Office (e.g., title agencies, real estate firms, real estate attorneys, mortgage lenders, etc.) in understanding procedures and requirements relating to the implementation and use of Cover Sheets. The information provided herein should also prove helpful to the general public when questions concerning land recordation arise. For specific questions not addressed herein or for additional assistance, please contact the Clerk's Office at (804) 748-1285.

- **What was the start date for requiring Land Records Cover Sheets?**
 - July 1, 2004
- **What will happen if the Clerk's Office receives an instrument for recording without a Cover Sheet?**
 - The instrument will not be recorded and will be returned to the filing party with information regarding Cover Sheet requirements. Further details concerning rejection are provided below.
- **What's the reason for implementation?**
 - Increased workload demands.
 - Clerks statewide have faced years of level funding, followed by a series of significant budget cuts. Further, the Commonwealth has appropriated no new monies for additional positions since the mid 1990s, thereby making it virtually impossible for Clerks of Court in high growth areas such as Chesterfield to keep pace with workload demands.
 - Pursuant to *Code of Virginia* § 17.1-227.1, circuit court clerks have discretion to require that all instruments recorded in the Deed Book be accompanied by a Land Records Cover Sheet.
 - Cover Sheet technology has been thoroughly tested in jurisdictions of varying size and has proven to be beneficial for both courts and their customers, particularly patrons from the real estate community. For court personnel, the technology has facilitated enhanced receipting and indexing activities, while customers have realized reduced errors and faster turnaround times for document processing.
- **How does the Cover Sheet work?**
 - The Cover Sheet software will generate a hard copy Cover Sheet containing a bar code. The bar code captures the information needed to receipt and index the transaction.
 - When the instrument is presented for recordation in the Clerk's Office, staff in the Recording area will use a bar code reader to scan the bar code on the Cover Sheet. In so doing, information necessary for recordation is extracted from the bar code. That information is then automatically transmitted to the receipting system and ultimately the indexing system.

- **How do I access the Cover Sheet program?**
 - Cover Sheet software, Cover Sheet Agent Online Edition (CSA Online), must be accessed from Manatron (formerly ILS), the vendor selected by the Supreme Court of Virginia to develop the software. Visit <https://csa.landsystems.com/CSA/> to access the program.
- **I just need to create one (1) Cover Sheet. Does CSA Online offer a free trial period?**
 - CSA Online contains a trial period which allows for the free creation of 25 Cover Sheets and 10 printed Cover Sheets.
- **I record documents regularly. How can I get unlimited use of the Cover Sheet program?**
 - Customers may elect to purchase the Cover Sheet Agent Online Edition (CSA Online). CSA Online is an Internet based service. To access and use it, you need an Internet Service Provider and web browser (e.g., Internet Explorer, Mozilla Firefox). The fee for CSA Online is a \$9.95 (PER SIMULTANEOUS USER), monthly recurring charge.
- **Can I obtain the Cover Sheet software on disk or download it from the vendor?**
 - No. Effective October 1, 2008, the Cover Sheet Agent (CSA) Desktop Edition software is no longer made available for download or purchase.
- **I obtained the CSA Desktop Edition a couple of years ago. Can I still obtain support on this software? Can I still use the software?**
 - As of November 1, 2008, the CSA Desktop Edition reached End of Life (EOL) and existing installations are no longer supported. License keys are no longer able to be registered or transferred.
 - Users who currently utilize the CSA Desktop Edition will still continue to generate and print compliant Cover Sheets even beyond the EOL of the product.
- **Do I have to obtain the Cover Sheet software from Manatron (formerly ILS)?**
 - Yes. At this time, Manatron (formerly ILS) is the only vendor providing software that will interface with the Supreme Court of Virginia's receipting system.
 - If and when another vendor develops software for Cover Sheet generation, it is imperative that the software interface properly with existing systems. Pursuant to *Code of Virginia* § 17.1-227.1, all Cover Sheet software applications must be developed in conjunction with the Supreme Court of Virginia. Cover Sheets from other vendors CANNOT be accepted at the recordation counter unless prior approval has been granted and the aforementioned statutory requirements have been met.
- **What if I do not own a computer or do not have access to one?**
 - Please call the Circuit Court Clerk's Office at 748-1285 for additional information.
- **What if I'm unsure as to whom to list as Grantors and Grantees?**
 - A Quick Reference Guide for Indexing Land Records Instruments is available in hard copy form in the Clerk's Office. It may also be downloaded from the Clerk's Office web site accessible at: www.chesterfield.gov.
 - The Quick Reference Guide is intended to provide guidance relating to the most commonly-filed instruments. Please refer to the guide first to see if your question is addressed. If it is not, one may always contact the Clerk's Office for assistance.

- **Under what circumstances would my Cover Sheet be rejected?**
 - If the bar code is unreadable and cannot be scanned (to avoid this problem, the use of a laser printer is encouraged).
 - If the instrument type is incorrect.
 - If the page count provided is incorrect.
 - If the “Recording Paid for by” field is not accurate.
 - If the consideration or assessment amount on which taxes are to be paid is not provided or is incorrect.
 - If significant errors are found in the Grantor/Grantee name fields.
- **What if my Cover Sheet is rejected and I need to make a quick fix?**
 - A new Cover Sheet must be prepared so that a new barcode with the correct information is generated. **Changes cannot be made manually.**
 - Public access computers with access to the Cover Sheet program are available in the Clerk’s Office’s Record Room and at the Central Library adjacent to the Courts Building.
 - Users must have a monthly subscription in order to access the Cover Sheet software from the Record Room or from library computers.
- **Do I need a special printer to print the Cover Sheet? Can I present a fax copy of a Cover Sheet?**
 - Use of a laser printer is strongly recommended to ensure that the Cover Sheet bar code is readable. Although bubble jet and ink jet printers may produce a legible bar code, older models may not be equipped for high-resolution printing. Dot matrix printers should not be used as they generally are not capable of generating a readable bar code. If you have any doubt about the quality of the bar code produced by your printer, please present a sample to Recording staff for testing prior to presenting instruments for recordation.
 - Cover Sheets printed on a fax machine are acceptable, provided the bar code is readable by scanning equipment in the Clerk’s Office. Again, presenting a test sample to Recording staff prior to recordation is highly recommended.
- **Will the Clerk’s permanent index reflect information from the Cover Sheet or from the instrument?**
 - Ideally, information contained on the Cover Sheet will match that contained in the instrument. If differences exist, the permanent index will reflect information contained on the instrument (i.e., all final index entries will continue to be verified against the instrument).
- **If I record two related instruments (e.g., Power of Attorney and Alive and Well Affidavit), am I required to present two separate Cover Sheets?**
 - Yes. Each instrument to be recorded must be accompanied by a separate Cover Sheet.
- **Is the Cover Sheet considered part of the instrument when assessing fees?**
 - When assessing recordation fees, the Cover Sheet will not be counted as a page.
 - After recordation, the instrument and Cover Sheet become one document. Therefore, if a certified copy were prepared after recordation, copy fees would be based on the total page count including the Cover Sheet.
 - Although the Cover Sheet is not included as a page in determining applicable filing fees, the law prohibits the Cover Sheet from being used to convey title or interest in real property. The law also prohibits purporting that the Cover Sheet is a document in the chain of title conveying any interest in real property (*Code of Virginia* § 17.1-227.1).

- **If I must re-record an instrument, should I attach the original Cover Sheet and create a new Cover Sheet for the re-recording? When computing fees, is the original Cover Sheet counted as page one?**
 - Yes. A new Cover Sheet must be prepared for a document that is re-recorded. The new Cover Sheet that accompanies the re-recording would not be counted as a page when assessing recording costs; however, since the **original** Cover Sheet becomes a part of the instrument after recordation, it would be counted as a page in computing fees for the re-recording.
- **On which document will the Clerk's Office staff affix recordation data?**
 - On the Cover Sheet, staff will denote recordation data such as instrument number, date/time of recording, and Deed Book and Page Number.
 - In keeping with current practice, the last page of the instrument will be endorsed with the Clerk's recordation certification.
- **How do I know which instrument type code to use on the Cover Sheet?**
 - The Cover Sheet software offers numerous options, some of which are more detailed than necessary. **Selecting codes that correspond to current indexing practices is recommended.** For example, the software offers more than fifty (50) instrument type codes for a Deed. In most cases, choosing a simple Deed of Bargain and Sale is sufficient. If questions arise relating to instrument type codes, please do not hesitate to contact the Clerk's Office for assistance.
- **Is the grantee address required on both the Cover Sheet and instrument?**
 - Information that is required by law to be included on land record instruments remains unchanged; therefore, the Cover Sheet will not alleviate the legal requirement for this information. Since the grantee address is not essential for receipting and indexing purposes, however, it is not required to be included on the Cover Sheet.
- **Is the Tax ID required on both the Cover Sheet and instrument?**
 - Pursuant to statute, the Tax ID is incorporated in the permanent index. Consequently, filers must include the Tax ID on **BOTH** the Cover Sheet and the instrument. When preparing the Cover Sheet, **the Tax ID must be placed in the field labeled "Tax Map Number."**
- **Will the Cover Sheet calculate fees so that I know my recording cost?**
 - No. Although the Cover Sheet assists the Clerk's Office with the receipting process, the Cover Sheet software itself does not assist the user with fee calculation.
 - The Supreme Court of Virginia provides a calculator to assist users with determining recording costs for instruments to be recorded in the Deed Book. To access this system, visit the Supreme Court of Virginia's website at www.courts.state.va.us.
- **If I list "return to" information on the Cover Sheet, am I still required to do so on the instrument? What if I want the Clerk's Office to file the recorded instrument in the Record Room instead of returning it by mail?**
 - If "return to" information is inserted on the Cover Sheet in the appropriate field, users are no longer required to list this information on the first page of the instrument.
 - Users requesting that instruments be filed in the Record Room for pickup instead of being returned by mail should list the appropriate individual/firm name in the "Return Recording to" field. The user would then enter "FILE IN RECORD ROOM" in the return address field on the Cover Sheet.

- **Whom should I contact if I have further questions?**
 - Questions related to the software should be directed to Manatron.
 - Phone: (301) 587-7531; E-mail: support@landsystems.com
 - Questions related to procedures should be directed to the Clerk's Office.
 - Phone: (804) 748-1285; E-mail: circuitcourtclerk@chesterfield.gov

Quick Tips	
Tax ID	Do not use PIN field. Insert in Tax Map Number field.
Suffix field	Use to denote Tr, AKA, Jr, Sr, III, etc.
Assessed Value, when necessary	Enter in "Assumed" field
Refinance Deed of Trust	The Consideration field should always include the value of the Deed of Trust being recorded. If refinancing is through the same lender, the "Assumed" field should include the original amount that is being refinanced. If refinancing is through a different lender, the "Assumed" field must be 0.00.
Existing Debt field	No need to use
Certificate of Satisfaction	For Book/Page reference, insert recording information for oldest instrument (earliest Book #). Recording staff will ensure that searchers are prompted to "see instrument" if more than one instrument is referenced.
Subordination Agreement	Insert 0.00 in all money fields
Business Names	Enter the entire business name in the "last name" field. For all business entities, flag the "corp" field even if the business is not incorporated. This will prevent the system from requiring input in the first name field. If a business name includes a person's name, the surname should be listed first (e.g., John Doe Contractors should be listed as Doe John Contractors)

SOFTWARE REQUIREMENTS OF ILS SYSTEM

The Cover Sheet software does not require data to be provided based on specific instrument types. However, it does require that the following data fields be completed for **ALL** instrument types:

1. Instrument Type (Title tab)
2. City/County (Title tab)
3. At least one Grantor - Last Name field (Grantor tab)
4. At least one Grantee - Last Name field (Grantee tab) – Enter N/A if none
5. At least one Parcel - Short Property Description field (Parcel tab)

It is strongly recommended that the following data fields be completed, however, data in these fields is not required by the software and the user is still able to print the Cover Sheet without this data:

1. Grantee Address 1 (Title tab)
2. Grantee City (Title tab)
3. Grantee State (Title tab)
4. Grantee ZIP (Title tab)
5. Instrument Prepared By (Title tab)
6. Parcel ID (Parcel tab) – **Ignore this prompt. Always insert Tax ID in Tax Map #.**
7. Tax Map Number (Parcel tab) – **While not required by the software, this data field must be completed for indexing purposes.**

If a user tries to print a Cover Sheet which does not include information in any of the above fields, a message will appear notifying the user of those fields that are incomplete. If all required fields have been completed but one or more of the recommended fields remain incomplete, the software will generate a warning message for the recommended fields and a "Print Anyway" button is enabled, allowing the user to print the Cover Sheet. Conversely, if any of the required fields are incomplete, the "Print Anyway" button is disabled, restricting the user from printing the Cover Sheet.